



General information

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How do I pay the USCIS immigrant fee?



U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

If you are immigrating to the United States and will be admitted as a lawful permanent resident, you must pay the \$165 USCIS Immigrant Fee. You pay this fee online through the USCIS Electronic Immigration System (USCIS ELIS). We strongly encourage you to pay this fee **after** you receive your immigrant visa packet from the U.S. Embassy or consulate abroad (including Canada and Mexico) and **before** you depart for the United States. Paying before you depart for the United States will ensure that you receive your Permanent Resident Card (commonly referred to as a Green Card) without delay.

What is the USCIS Immigrant Fee?

The USCIS Immigrant Fee of \$165 recovers USCIS costs related to immigrant visas granted by the U.S. Department of State (DOS) at U.S. embassies and consulates. The fee covers the cost of USCIS processing, filing, and maintaining immigrant visa packets, plus the cost of producing Permanent Resident Cards.

Please Note: You now have to pay separate fees to DOS and USCIS. You must pay your immigrant visa application processing fees to DOS and the USCIS Immigrant Fee (\$165).

What is the process for paying the USCIS Immigrant Fee?

1. Attend your appointment at a U.S. Embassy or Consulate

- Receive a handout that explains how to pay the USCIS Immigrant Fee. Please keep this document with your records as it contains your personal immigration information.
- Located at the top of the handout you will find your:
 - Alien number (A-Number, the letter "A" followed by 8 or 9 numbers) and DOS Case ID number (3 letters followed by 9 or 10 numbers);
 - For Diversity Visa Immigrants, the DOS Case ID will have four numbers followed by two letters followed by five numbers.
- Receive your sealed immigrant visa packet.

2. Create your online USCIS ELIS Account

- Go to www.uscis.gov/uscis-elis and review the USCIS ELIS online customer service resources.
- Follow the directions to create an online account.

3. Pay the USCIS Immigrant Fee

- After you have set up your USCIS ELIS account, select "USCIS Immigrant Fee" from the "Available Benefits" drop down menu to pay your \$165 fee online.
- You can pay the fee for yourself and for any family members who will be living with you in the United States in one transaction. Each person's \$165 fee must be paid before they can receive a Permanent Resident Card.
- Provide a Visa, Master Card, American Express, Discover Card, or debit card; or U.S. bank checking account and routing numbers.

What happens after you arrive in the United States?

1. Arrive with your Immigrant Visa Packet at U.S. Port of Entry

- You are admitted to the United States as a lawful permanent resident by U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

2. Receive your Permanent Resident Card (Form I-551)

- After you are admitted to the United States, USCIS will automatically verify payment of the USCIS Immigrant Fee and mail your Permanent Resident Card to the address you provided to DOS at the time of your immigrant visa interview or to U.S. Customs and Border Protection at the time of your admission.
- If you have paid your fee in USCIS ELIS and have not received a Permanent Resident Card within 30 days from your date of admission to the United States, please contact the USCIS National Customer Service Center at 1-800-375-5283 (Hearing Impaired TDD Customer Service: 1-800-767-1833) or you can schedule an InfoPass appointment for your local office to inquire about your case. To make an InfoPass appointment, go to www.infopass.uscis.gov.

- If you move to another residence after you arrive in the United States, you will need to update your address with USCIS:
 - **Step 1:** Update your mailing address in USCIS ELIS under the **"View My Profile"** section on the main menu;
 - **Step 2:** Report a change of address to USCIS within 10 days of moving to a new residence by completing a USCIS Form AR-11, Change of Address. You can file an AR-11 online at <https://egov.uscis.gov/crisgwi/go?action=coa.Terms> or by mail. If you use the Online Change of Address, you do not need to file a paper Form AR-11. To learn more about the AR-11, Change of Address process please visit <http://www.uscis.gov/ar-11>.

Please Note: We strongly recommend that you update your address by visiting your local U.S. post office in person or online at <https://www.usps.com/umove>. You should receive a confirmation notice from the U.S. Postal Service of your address change at your new residence.

Tips on paying the USCIS Immigrant Fee

- Attorneys, accredited representatives, and employers are **not authorized** to create a USCIS ELIS account on your behalf to pay the USCIS Immigrant Fee. Only you, as the immigrant, may open a USCIS ELIS account and pay the required fee in order to obtain your Permanent Resident Card.
- If your A-number is fewer than 9 digits, insert a zero after the "A" and before the first digit to create a 9 digit number (for example "A12345678" would become "A012345678").
- You can only update your address in USCIS ELIS after you have created a USCIS ELIS account and paid the USCIS Immigrant Fee.
- Do not use your computer's **"Back"** button to navigate when paying the fee. This may cause errors. Instead, use the navigation buttons within USCIS ELIS to go forward or backwards.
- Click on the **"Submit Payment"** button only once for each fee paid. If you click the button more than once, you may pay the fee multiple times.
- You **must** pay the USCIS Immigrant Fee online through USCIS ELIS. USCIS **will not** accept payments via mail.
- Print a copy of the transaction and payment receipt for your records.

What if I cannot pay my USCIS Immigrant Fee before I depart for the United States?

If you are unable to pay the fee before your departure, you must pay this fee after you arrive in the United States. If there is no record of payment in USCIS ELIS following your admission to the United States, USCIS will send a Request for Payment, which will include instructions on paying your fee. Please note that you **will not** receive your Permanent Resident Card until you have paid the USCIS Immigrant Fee.

How do I know if I have to pay the fee or if I am exempt from paying the fee?

Individuals who have been issued immigrant visas by DOS and are applying for admission to the U.S. need to pay this fee unless they are exempt. DOS will notify you if you are exempt from paying the fee. The following immigrants generally are exempt from paying the immigrant fee:

- Children who enter the United States under either the Orphan or Hague adoption programs;
- Iraqi and Afghan special immigrants;
- Returning residents (SB-1s); and
- Individuals who are issued K visas.

What happens if I fail to pay the fee?

USCIS will not issue your Permanent Resident Card until you have paid the USCIS Immigrant Fee. Once the fee is paid, USCIS will process your Permanent Resident Card.

After arriving in the United States, you will receive a passport stamp that validates your permanent resident status for 1 year. Once this stamp expires, you will need to possess a Permanent Resident Card as evidence of your lawful permanent resident status.

What is USCIS ELIS?

USCIS ELIS is a streamlined online account-based immigration system. Through USCIS ELIS, customers can view their benefit requests, receive electronic notification of decisions, and receive real-time case status updates.

USCIS ELIS allows applicants to:

- Conveniently and securely set up and manage their accounts;
- Electronically submit applications and supporting documents;
- Receive and respond to notices and decision electronically;
- Make payments online; and
- Access real-time information about the status of their cases.

For More Information

For more information on the USCIS Immigrant Fee, please visit www.uscis.gov/ImmigrantFee and www.uscis.gov/uscis-elis.

Key Information

Key USCIS forms referenced in this guide	Form #
Permanent Resident Card	I-551

Key USCIS web sites referenced in this guide	Web site link
USCIS Electronic Immigration System	www.uscis.gov/uscis-elis
InfoPass	www.infopass.uscis.gov

Key USCIS phone numbers referenced in this guide	Phone number
USCIS National Customer Service Center	1-800-375-5283
Hearing Impaired TDD Customer Service	1-800-767-1833

Other U.S. Government Services—Click or Call	
General Information	www.usa.gov
New Immigrants	www.welcometoUSA.gov
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement	www.ice.gov
U.S. Customs and Border Protection	www.cbp.gov
U.S. Department of State	www.state.gov
U.S. Postal Service	www.usps.gov

For more copies of this guide, or information about other customer guides, please visit www.uscis.gov/howdoi.

You can also visit www.uscis.gov to download forms, e-file some applications, check the status of an application, and more. It's a great place to start!

If you don't have Internet access at home or work, try your local library.

If you cannot find what you need, please call **Customer Service at: 1-800-375-5283**
Hearing Impaired TDD Customer Service:
1-800-767-1833

Disclaimer: *This guide provides basic information to help you become generally familiar with our rules and procedures. For more information, or the law and regulations, please visit our Web site. Immigration law can be complex, and it is impossible to describe every aspect of every process. You may wish to be represented by a licensed attorney or by a nonprofit agency accredited by the Board of Immigration Appeals.*